

voice is less challenging Character, that
mysterious
element in style, suffers a blurring The
inclination must
always be, in joint writing, to press as much
into a given
sentence as it can be made to hold, to make of
it a port-
manteau, accommodating and providing for
points that
have occurred to either, views seen from a
slightly different
angle by one or the other So the sentences
get longer
and longer, and have the tired fall of
something submitted
to repeated drafting, emended and extended,
with a quali-
fying adjective tucked in here, an adverb
there This
heavy reinforcement by adjectives and
adverbs, and,
very often, by clauses and parentheses,
causes a clotting
of the flow of living blood which is the essence
of a vital
style The practice of dictation, like the
extensive employ-
ment of secretaries, must increase every
inherent difficulty
of doing, together, something like \nting,
whose very
essence is personal

Whatever be the causes, the result is
indubitable Many
readers lose sight of the logic of the
argument, and fail
to realise how masterly is the marshalling of
the material
into an ordered, moving stream, because the
style, the
medium of communication, is unattractive
Readers, at
best, are frail and *difficile*, the authors have
not deigned
to assist them by any concessions Their
prefaces are
often tougher than the books that follow
them, their
titles are unprepossessing, their volumes are
formidable

to look at and uncomfortable to handle
Although they
have lived, and \ntten, into a period which has
witnessed
transforming innovations and improvements in
the entire
technique of the printing, presentation and
production
of the written word, they have remained
unaffected by
this change in format, and to all appearance,
serenely
unaware of it The uniform edition of their
works is an
eyesore in the shelves that contain it, and
Mrs Webb's
Afy Apprenticeship is perhaps the worst smnei
in a row of